

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W
-----012038 097902 /53

P 011925Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6566
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PINS, ES, CS
SUBJECT: CLARAMOUNT'S DECLARATIONS IN COSTA RICA

REF: (A) SAN SALVADOR 937; (B) SAN JOSE 0813

1. IN FEB. 28 DECLARATIONS TO COSTA RICAN MEDIA BY COLONEL ERNESTO CLARAMOUNT AT AIRPORT AND LATER AT HOME OF SALVADOREAN UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY WHO HAS OFFERED HIM A PLACE TO STAY, THE VISIBLY FATIGUED EX-CANDIDATE REITERATED KEY POINTS MADE IN DECLARATION TO SALVADOREAN PRESS WHICH WAS ALSO RELEASED HERE (SEPTTEL), NAMELY:

--THAT HIS DEPARTURE WAS "VOLUNTARY," AND THAT HE RECEIVED FULL GUARANTEES RE HIS PERSONAL SAFETY FROM ARMED FORCES.

--THAT HE IS IN PERFECT PHYSICAL STATE AND THAT AT NO TIME WAS HE SUBJECTED TO ABUSE.

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--THAT HIS HUMAN RIGHTS HAD NOT BEEN VIOLATED.

THESE DECLARATIONS WERE CARRIED WIDELY LIVE AND TAPED ON LOCAL RADIO AND TELEVISION FEB 28 AND IN PRESS MARCH 1.

2. OTHER SALIENT POINTS COVERED BY CLARAMOUNT IN RESPONSE TO NUMEROUS PRESS QUERIES:

--THAT HE IS PRESIDENT OF EL SALVADOR

--THAT HE DECIDED ON ASYLUM IN COSTA RICA BECAUSE HE ADMIRES ITS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

--THAT HE IS THINKING ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT HE WILL CONTINUE IN POLITICS.

--THAT HENHAS UNDER MILITARY ORDERS WHEN HE WAS RELIEVED OF HIS MILITARY STATUS IN THE EARLY HOURS OF FEB 28, BUT THAT HE CONTINUES "BELIEVING IN AND RESPECTING THE ARMED FORCES."

--THAT THERE WAS SHAMELESS ELECTORAL FRAUD, AND THAT HIS PARTY HAD AMPLY PROVED IT. HE ESTIMATED THAT IN NUMBERS THE FRAUD REPRESENTED TWO THIRDS OF THE POPULATION. CLARAMOUNT SAID THAT OCCUPATION OF PLAZA LIBERTAD WAS UNDERTAKEN TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM REACTING VIOLENTLY TO THE FRAUD, WHICH, HE PHQNTED OUT, HAD BEEN DISCOVERED PRIOR TO THE ELECTION IN THE COLLUSION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT PARTY AND THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL.

3. CLARAMOUNT WAS QUOTED IN MARCH 1 LA NACION THAT HE IS THINKING ABOUT ENTERING CATTLE RANCHING IN COSTA RICA, AND THAT HE WOULD BE CONVERSING WITH COSTA RICAN RANCHERS IN THIS REGARD.

4. IN LONG NARRATIVE TO MEDIA ON EVENTS DURING HIS LAST 24 HOURS IN SALVADOR, CLARAMOUNT STATED THAT AFTER TEAR GAS INTRODUCED IN EL ROSARIO CHURCH, HE MANAGED TO MAKE CONTACT THROUGH TWO U.S. NEWSMEN WITH DEFATT AND POLOFF OF U.S. EMBASSY. ACCORDING TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ONE PRESS ACCOUNT, DEFATT ASKED CLARAMOUNT TO GIVE HIM SOME TIME TO SEE WHAT HE COULD DO.

5. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, FONMIN FACIO HAS INFORMED CLARAMOUNT OF WHAT IS EXPECTED OF HIM AS A POLITICAL EXILE, AND CLARAMOUNT IS IN PROCESS OF REQUESTING SUCH STATUS.

6. COMMENT: CLARAMOUNT COMES ACROSS TO COSTA RICANS AS A NICE GENTLEMAN, POLITICALLY WISHY-WASHY, AND ESSENTIALLY A LOYAL MILITARY MAN. HE IS SAYING MANY OF THE THINGS ONE IN HIS SITUATION SHOULD SAY, BUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS DEPARTURE, HIS MILD CRITICISM OF THE MILITARY, AND THE ABSENCE OF STRONGLY HELD SENSE OF OUTRAGE FAIL TO CONVINCE. THE COLONEL'S FATIGUE IS EVIDENT, AND PERHAPS FOR THAT REASON HIS GANAS SEEM MINIMAL. THE IMAGE HE CONVEYS -- AT LEAST SO FAR -- IS ONE WHO IS RELIEVED TO HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF SALVADOR.

7. SO FAR, CLARAMOUNT'S PRESENCE HAS NOT CAUSED ANY STRONG COSTA RICAN REACTION TO WHAT IS GOING ON IN EL SALVADOR. RATHER

IT IS VIEWED AS ANOTHER OF CENTRAL AMERICA'S MANY IMBROGLIOS
WITH, AS HAPPENS SO OFTEN, THE POLITICAL LOSER TAKING REFUGE
IN COSTA RICA.
KILDAY

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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